

IMPLEMENTATION TEAM MEETING NOTES

February 8, 2001, 9:00 a.m.-4 p.m.

NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE OFFICES PORTLAND, OREGON

I. Greetings, Introductions and Review of the Agenda.

The February 8, 2001 meeting of the Implementation Team, held at the National Marine Fisheries Service's offices in Portland, Oregon, was chaired by Jim Ruff of NMFS. The agenda for the January 11 meeting and a list of attendees are attached as Enclosures A and B.

The following is a distillation (not a verbatim transcript) of items discussed at the meeting, together with actions taken on those items. Please note that some enclosures referenced in the body of the text may be too lengthy to attach; all enclosures referenced are available upon request from NMFS's Kathy Ceballos at 503/230-5420 or via email at kathy.ceballos@noaa.gov.

Ruff welcomed everyone to the meeting, led a round of introductions and a review of the agenda.

2. Updates.

A. In-Season Management (TMT). TMT Chair Cindy Henriksen said there is now a preliminary draft of the 2001 Water Management Plan available via on the TMT website; in general, she said, we're still trying to reach consensus on our operational priorities in this very low water year. To be honest, we have yet to really sink our teeth into the 2001 Water Management Plan, Henriksen said; we have discussed the possibility of convening a TMT subgroup in mid-February to develop a draft of the Plan for discussion at TMT's February 21 meeting, she said.

Any idea when the Water Management Plan will be completed? Ruff asked. By April 15, Henriksen replied; again, however, there is a draft available now on the TMT website. The format will be quite similar to last year's, she said, although it is our intention to incorporate last year's goals and objectives appendix into the body of the 2001 plan.

In response to a question, Henriksen said fall and winter operations will be addressed in the one-year implementation plan. We will be discussing the various elements of the implementation plans later in today's agenda, said Ruff.

B. Independent Scientific Advisory Board (ISAB). No ISAB report was presented at today's meeting.

C. Water Quality Team (WQT). With respect to the Columbia mainstem TMDL, Mary Lou Soscia said EPA considers public outreach to be a key component to the TMDL development process. She said it is EPA's hope that the Regional Forum can become the main venue for that public outreach strategy. Soscia noted that the States of Oregon and Idaho have now signed the Memorandum of Agreement on the TMDL; Washington is expected to sign this agreement soon. We will be meeting with the PUDs at Chelan PUD in Wenatchee on February 14, she said; we will also be talking directly to the pulp and paper industry, as well as the municipalities on the river that will be affected by the TMDL. We're also exploring some data sharing opportunities, she said, adding that, if anyone is interested in obtaining more specific information, they should contact her directly at 503/326-3250.

Soscia distributed Enclosure D, a fact sheet on the Columbia and Snake River mainstem TMDL. She spent a few minutes going through the contents of this document; please refer to Enclosure D for details. Is there a schedule for the development of the TMDL? Ruff asked. We're working on that with the states, Soscia replied; Oregon has a more aggressive schedule in mind, and would like to complete the process by December 2001. Washington's schedule, as laid out in their settlement agreement, would put completion of the TMDL farther into the future. It's a sensitive area, she said, and all I can tell you is that we're working on it.

We will be discussing the workplan in more detail at a meeting with the states and tribes on February 21, Soscia said, adding that if the IT would like a technical presentation on the TMDL development process, that would be completely appropriate. Soscia added that, once Washington signs the MOA, EPA will send out a letter describing this agreement. It sounds as though we will need to place a TMDL update on the future IT agendas, said Ruff – we will do so.

We are also talking about expanding the Water Quality Team membership to include industry representatives and others, so that we can discuss the TMDL development process in some detail at the meetings of that group, Soscia said.

D. System Configuration Team (SCT). No SCT report was presented at today's meeting.

E. Quantitative Analytical Report (QAR). No QAR report was presented at today's meeting.

F. Update on Oregon TDG Waiver. Ruff said the Corps sent a letter to Oregon DEQ a week ago stating its intention to spill during the spring and summer fish passage seasons, and expressing a desire to go through the DEQ process to obtain a variance. There is some question whether the requisite paperwork can be prepared in time for presentation at the March 6 Oregon DEQ commission meeting, said Ruff; if not, it may be necessary to convene an emergency DEQ commission meeting to consider that request. The Corps and EPA are working with DEQ to get this issue resolved in a timely manner, said Ruff. Jim Athearn offered one correction, noting that the Corps' letter did not in fact request a waiver – it said the Corps' intention is to stay in compliance with existing water quality standards if possible. Mainly, Athearn said, we want to work with Oregon DEQ to ensure that the spill program can proceed as planned in 2001.

Soscia said Oregon wants to talk about the TMDL; there is a willingness on their part to consider a multi-year waiver as a part of that TMDL development process. The first two letters from the Corps were not considered adequate for the purposes of obtaining a waiver, Soscia added; we're trying to figure out some way to allow a decision to be made in a timely enough fashion so that it doesn't interfere with the spill program in this critical water year. The action agencies will probably be called on the carpet at the March Commission meeting, she said, because the Commission expected the federal agencies to start working with them on this issue in December. Obviously, she said, there is a need to start working more closely with the states to ensure that these kinds of situations don't arise in the future. Ruff noted that the BiOp wasn't signed until late December, so it would have been difficult for the action agencies to make their waiver request in December. The bottom line is that we're trying to resolve this situation, said Ruff; there is some reason for hope, because the right parties are now talking.

I'm a little confused, said Howard Schaller – how can we implement the spill program without a waiver? It has to do with the BiOp negotiations, said Soscia – in the BiOp, it was agreed that the Corps will request any necessary waivers with the assistance of NMFS. However, the Corps has legal concerns about the precedent this would set for their projects throughout the country, Soscia said; we're trying to work with the Corps to resolve their concerns, but in the meantime, the Commission was not happy that the Corps' letter did not specifically request a waiver. The basic lesson from all of this is that we have to do this better in the future, Soscia said. I agree, said Ruff; however, this is the first year we've changed the process, and I think most of us expected to encounter a few bumps in the road.

3. Emergency Power Conditions.

BPA's Therese Lamb provided a presentation on BPA's 2001 Power and Operational Outlook, available as Enclosure C. She noted that this is the same presentation that was made at

yesterday's Power Planning Council and Technical Management Team meetings. There are two objectives here, she said: to consolidate the information we have about the current water supply situation and its impacts on the power system, and to give you a sense of what the Regional Executives have been talking about.

Lamb touched on the current water situation, the power supply situation, current market prices, the status of efforts to reduce power demand up and down the West Coast, the likely effects of the water supply situation on fish measures in 2001, and a suggested risk management approach. Please refer to Enclosure C for detailed information.

Lamb noted that current streamflows are only about 60% of average; they are much lower than average monthly streamflows over the past five years, which have been well above average during the winter period. She said the current (February early-bird) forecast shows a January-July runoff volume forecast of 67 MAF at The Dalles, 63 percent of average. If this forecast becomes reality, she said, 2001 would be the fourth-lowest water year in the 60-year historic water record. These below-average streamflows will reduce the federal hydrosystem generation by up to 4,000 MW compared to generation in the past five years, roughly equivalent to four times the amount of energy used annually by the city of Seattle. Ruff noted that this forecast assumes normal precipitation from here on out; the River Forecast Center recently said that, even if the region receives 125% of normal precipitation between now and June, the forecast volume at The Dalles will only increase to 82 MAF. If the current dry trend continues, he said, the forecast will be even worse than what is shown here.

Further complicating the picture is the fact that unit outages and increased power demand in California have made it impossible for California to export generation to the Northwest this winter, as they would usually be doing, Lamb said. The result is an extremely volatile power marketplace; energy prices in December 2000 were 10 times higher than the previous four-year annual average. The daily average market price escalated further in January, from \$175 per megawatt-hour on January 15 to \$450 on January 19, with hourly prices in excess of \$700.

In response to a question, Lamb said the two-for-one energy exchange with California is in effect; since November, BPA has sent approximately 300,000 MW to California, and the California ISO has returned about 520,000 MW. To the extent that California can guarantee a date by which all of the energy will be returned, said Lamb, Bonneville is willing to continue to do these exchanges, at least into mid-February or so.

In response to a question from Jim Nielsen, Lamb said California's monthly average unit outages were 7,400 aMW in December and 4,500 aMW in January; this compares to a five-year average unit outage of about 2,500 aMW. The reason for this high rate of outages is because last summer was so critical in California that the generators were forced to run every available unit, and now they're having to make extensive repairs, Jim Litchfield observed.

In one week alone (January 16-20), Lamb continued, BPA was forced to purchase approximately 1,000 aMW at a cost of more than \$50 million. In an effort to reduce load, Lamb said, during December and January, BPA sponsored ads in 17 Northwest newspapers informing the public of measures they can take to conserve energy. BPA also contracted for a total of 1,300 MW in market purchases and DSI load reductions at a cost of \$200 million. BPA also worked with the Northwest governors in their public call for a 1,000 MW reduction in energy consumption.

Litchfield noted that these measures are temporary; it is probably misleading to refer to these measures as “conservation,” because they are actually curtailment. Soscia said that, in EPA’s view, aggressive conservation efforts need to go hand in hand with any initiatives to build new resources which could have profound negative environmental impacts. Has there been a measurable response to this call for curtailment? Margaret Filardo asked. We’re testing that now, Lamb replied – we should have some data by the end of the week.

Why didn’t the power planners see this situation developing sooner, and take steps to rectify it – either through building new resources or conservation? another participant asked. In 1995, Chelan’s power planners saw this coming, said Dick Nason; they asked permission to raise Rocky Reach pool by three feet, but were refused because it slightly decreased water particle travel time. As a result, he said, Chelan purchased 21 combustion turbines. Basically, I think 20 different people would give you 20 different answers to your question, added Soscia.

Nielsen noted that the States of Oregon, Washington and Idaho have launched investigations into allegations of collusion and price-fixing in the energy market, because there appeared to be little or no relationship between energy prices and production costs. When prices were high during the summer, there was a connection between prices and production costs, Lamb replied; however, this winter, when the price of a megawatt-hour exceeded \$700, it would have been difficult to argue that the price of energy was a reflection of production cost.

With respect to the impacts of the power and water supply situation on fish, said Lamb, the Regional Executives (the regional directors of nine federal agencies) have made the decision to meet power demand and keep chum redds protected this winter, thereby reducing the level of April refill. Given the current forecast, according to BPA’s analysis, it would be necessary to reduce Columbia River flow at Bonneville to below 100 Kcfs in order to refill Grand Coulee and meet the system’s other April 10 target elevations. She noted that the Biological Opinion does contemplate both poor water years and power emergency situations; all current operations are within the parameters of NMFS’ 2000 FCRPS Biological Opinion.

The objectives of these operations are threefold, Lamb said – to maintain the integrity of the 2000 FCRPS BiOp while maintaining:

- BPA’s financial health (sufficient cash flow)

- High probability of meeting BPA's Treasury payment this September
- Balance between 2001 end-of-year reserve levels and 2002 rates.

Lamb touched briefly on the power system emergency provisions in the 2000 FCRPS BiOp; she added that the most recent power system emergency declaration is consistent with the TMT's emergency protocols in that it was announced through the TMT, the actions and responses have been described during weekly TMT meetings, and the fact that, during weekly meetings, TMT participants have had the opportunity to ask questions about the rationale for actions, associated risks, and to suggest alternative operations.

Lamb then went through BPA's proposed risk management approach for 2001 system operations; she noted that no decisions have been made on this proposal by the Regional Executives:

- Step 1: Identify failure for each risk (power system reliability, BPA financial health, biological harm to fish)
- Step 2: Define a contingency operation that can avoid failure to all identified risks
- Step 3: Identify indicators that may trigger the contingency operation.

Please refer to Pages 15-16 of Enclosure C for further details on each of these risk management steps.

Lamb noted that BPA analysts believe it will not be possible to avoid failure to all of the above-identified risks if the Biological Opinion program is fully implemented in 2001. With that in mind, BPA has developed a number of possible 2001 contingency operational proposals, said Lamb; such a contingency proposal could include any or all of the following measures:

- Operate to a Bonneville tailwater elevation of 11.7 feet/130 Kcfs flow during February and March
- Will not refill at all projects by June 30
- Possible reduced spring or summer spill program
- Emphasis on summer flow and spill to the extent possible
- A planning operation that will be adjusted by indicators throughout the migration season.

Lamb then went through BPA's calculations of the monthly probability that, under the BiOp and potential contingency operations, Bonneville's cash reserves could drop below \$500 million, \$300 million or to zero. She noted that, under the BiOp operational scenario, there is a 67% probability that BPA's cash reserves could reach zero during the month of July, due to the need to purchase power during the month of June so the projects can refill and spill can occur. She added that a 20% probability that cash reserves could reach zero is all BPA is willing to tolerate. She added that, under the "Meet BiOp" scenario, BPA calculates that there is a 55.9% chance that their cash reserves would fall below \$300 million; under the potential contingency operation, that risk falls to 16.1%.

The group discussed the potential ramifications of BPA's missing its Treasury payment in 2001; given the current status of Oregon's Congressional delegation, said Dan Daley, failure to make our Treasury payment this year could result in extremely serious political consequences and a reduction in the public benefits BPA customarily provides to the Northwest.

Moving on, Lamb highlighted anticipated monthly streamflows at Lower Granite and McNary under both the BiOp and potential contingency operations (an average of about 150 Kcfs at McNary during the months of May, June and July, followed by about 125 Kcfs during the month of August; at Lower Granite, steadily receding flows from about 80 Kcfs during May down to 20 Kcfs during August). Lamb emphasized that, if the current forecast holds true, under either scenario, McNary and Lower Granite streamflows will be well below the BiOp's target flow levels.

Soscia noted that EPA has been modeling the potential environmental impacts of the proposed contingency operation; the preliminary results of that analysis are not encouraging.

In summary, said Lamb, it's fair to say that the Regional Executives are still struggling with the economic side of this issue; they would also find any input the IT might have on how a contingency operation might be structured extremely helpful.

In response to a question from John Palensky, Lamb said BPA is discussing the feasibility of obtaining more water from Canada; at this point, however, there is nothing definite to report.

Henriksen then provided updated water supply forecast and refill probability information (Enclosures E and F); the bottom line, she said, is that the February early-bird forecast has continued to decline from the January final. Snowpacks throughout the Northwest are generally between 45% and 70% of normal; the new forecast is for a January-July runoff volume of 67 MAF at The Dalles, just 63% of the 60-year average.

Henriksen said the Corps has also done a series of model runs showing the required end-of-month elevations at Libby, Dworshak and Hungry Horse if those projects are to have a 95% confidence, 70% confidence, 50% confidence, 30% confidence and 5% confidence of refill this year. Given the current elevation at Dworshak, said Henriksen, the Corps is estimating that there is about a 70% chance that Dworshak will refill completely in 2001, if we continue to release minimum outflow through the spring period. At Libby, based on that project's January 31 elevation, there is about a 40% confidence of refill in 2001, if it releases minimum outflow between now and June; at Hungry Horse, there is only a 20%-25% probability of refill this year. Jim Fodrea said Reclamation's analysis shows that, under the most likely operational scenario, Libby will be 23 feet from full on June 30, Hungry Horse, 17 feet from full.

My concern is that, while I can understand the value of Dworshak flow augmentation during the summer period, we shouldn't give up on the listed species in the Columbia just because there is more

biological information about listed species in the Snake, Litchfield said. In other words, he said, in Montana's view, it would be more appropriate to implement a proportional draft at all of the headwater storage projects this spring, including Dworshak.

The group discussed the expected level of Libby flow needed this summer for sturgeon and bull trout; Howard Schaller said it is likely that a 14-day pulse on the order of 14 Kcfs will be requested by the Fish and Wildlife Service.

It all comes down to what kind of priorities we want to set in this particular water year, said Henriksen – we need to have that discussion in order to complete the 2001 Water Management Plan, and to guide our operational decisions throughout this very challenging water year. Our understanding is that the Regional Executives have decreed that Dworshak refill is the highest priority for the region, she said. What's the prospect for Grand Coulee refill this year? Ruff asked. Very good, Fodrea replied – we are anticipating that Grand Coulee will refill in June.

Ruff said NMFS supports the emphasis on Dworshak refill because of its value in providing both flow augmentation and temperature control, particularly in a year when temperature conditions are likely to be warmer than average. It was reiterated that there is about a 70% chance Dworshak will in 2001, if the project continues to release minimum outflow. Schaller said the Fish and Wildlife Service want to ensure that at least the bull trout flows are maintained this summer from Libby. Ruff replied that the bull trout flows are assumed in the Corps' reservoir refill calculations. We do recognize, however, that there will likely be little or no salmon flow augmentation water available from Libby or Hungry Horse this summer, Ruff said.

Litchfield reiterated that Montana feels that a proportional draft at all three projects – Libby, Hungry Horse and Dworshak – would preserve the most summer flow augmentation benefits from Libby and Hungry Horse. It is unlikely that any of these projects will refill in 2001, given our past history of using Dworshak for spring flow augmentation, Litchfield said.

Henriksen suggested that targeting a somewhat reduced level of refill – within five feet or ten feet of full – at Dworshak would allow for greater operational flexibility. The group devoted a few minutes of discussion to the biological criticality of the listed species in the Snake vs. those in the Upper and Mid-Columbia; Steve Smith made the point that summer flow augmentation may well be more critical for the Columbia River stocks than it is for the listed stocks in the Snake.

Henriksen said the Corps does not plan on using flow augmentation from any of the three storage projects during the spring period. She reiterated the fact that some flexibility in the operational priorities for these projects would be helpful to the TMT; if chockablock full by June 30 is our goal, then we have zero operational flexibility at any of the projects, she said. We need a low-water-year strategy that allows us to make choices that have the most benefit for all of the system's users, she said.

Daley suggested that it may make sense to consider transportation from McNary this spring; Ruff replied that the BiOp contemplates transportation from McNary during the summer. Any McNary transportation during the spring is tied to doing an evaluation, which will not be possible to do this year, he said -- the McNary adult PIT-tag detector will not be in place soon enough. Still, we should at least consider spring transportation from McNary as part of a low-water contingency plan, Daley said. And NMFS is willing to at least discuss it for this year, said Ruff.

What is the State of Oregon's position on refill probabilities? Ruff asked. I can't tell you specifically at this point, Christine Mallette replied; however, I think this discussion points out the need for greater clarity in the BiOp, to avoid protection measures that conflict with one another. The BiOp relies on protection measures provided for one particular species, she said; however, there are often conflicts between species and between seasons. It's a time when the inadequacies of the BiOp are fairly starkly exposed, she said. It's unfortunate that conditions are so poor this year, Ruff said.

The immediate issue, then, is that we need to maintain a flow of 130 Kcfs at Bonneville for power system reliability and chum protection, and to do so, we need to increase discharge from either Libby, Hungry Horse or Dworshak, Jim Yost observed. The group devoted a few minutes of debate to the question of whether the current operation is for power system reliability or for chum protection; Ruff observed that from NMFS' perspective this is a dual-purpose operation.

Yost said it is difficult for him to understand the purpose of releasing additional water from Libby and Hungry Horse at this point in the season, given the fact that water from those projects is being held up in Flathead Lake, and takes two weeks to reach Grand Coulee even under the best of circumstances.

Ruff reiterated that NMFS continues to view Dworshak refill as the highest operational priority; that does not mean, however, that NMFS is unwilling to consider any alternative operational or draft scenarios. Obviously, he said, there are a lot of questions about what system operations should look like in this very complex water year; we need to have some discussion about both short-term and long-term planning. The Regional Executives have made it clear that we need a long-term plan, rather than a week-to-week plan, said Lamb, and they're looking to the Regional Forum to create that plan. My question is who, precisely, is going to create that plan, said Litchfield.

I think we have agreement that we need to set some longer-term priorities, said Henriksen. The problem is that what I'm hearing is that everyone's headwater projects are sacrosanct, which leaves us zero operational flexibility. This is a very low water year, and we have to make choices. Does "refill" mean completely full, she said, or could we consider refilling to within five or 10 feet of full? That's the kind of question the TMT can't really answer, she said. I can answer that, Ruff replied -- it is not a hard and fast rule, from NMFS' perspective, that "refill" means absolutely full. NMFS does want input from all of the parties at this table, he said -- otherwise, NMFS will be forced to make those decisions, and we don't want to have to do that.

Ruff said that, in his view, developing the long-term operational plan requested by the Regional Executives is an assignment to TMT. Litchfield said the TMT had devoted an extensive discussion to just that issue at yesterday's meeting; everyone except him agreed Dworshak outflow should be reduced to minimum. It's not clear to me how these decisions are being made, he said, and I need to be able to explain this situation to the folks back in Montana.

After a few minutes of additional discussion, it was agreed that it makes sense for the IT and the TMT to work together to develop short- and long-term operational priorities for 2001. Essentially, said Fodrea, it sounds as though we would be accelerating the development of the 2001 Water Management Plan. That's correct, said Ruff. It was agreed that the IT and TMT will work together to develop a recommended contingency operation. It sounds, then, as though we need a joint TMT/IT session to discuss contingency planning, Ruff said – refill probabilities at the federal storage projects will be on the agenda for the first meeting, and people should come to the meeting prepared to present whatever proposals they may have as to what our priorities should be; the group will then winnow through these proposals to select a suite for analysis. The joint TMT/IT meeting was set for Thursday, February 15 at 9 a.m. at NMFS' Portland offices.

The faster we can reach agreement on a set of priorities, the more we can take these decisions out of the hands of the Regional Executives, said Lamb. The other piece of the contingency operations puzzle is, of course, the 2001 spill program; if it would be helpful, we can send out the spill assumptions BPA used to develop its contingency operations proposals ahead of next week's meeting, Lamb said. That would be very helpful, Schaller agreed. It was further agreed that both NMFS and the Corps will pull out their analysis of the ultra-low 1977 water year for presentation at that meeting.

So BPA has told us we cannot implement the Biological Opinion this year? Nielsen asked. Given current water and energy price conditions, that's true, Lamb replied, although if the water supply increases and/or prices fall, it may be possible to implement the BiOp operation this year.

4. Implementation Planning.

Daley distributed Enclosure G, the draft Five-Year Implementation Plan outline developed by the federal action agencies. He noted that the outline was developed with some input from NMFS and the Fish and Wildlife Service. Daley drew the group's attention to the flow chart on Page 6 of Enclosure G; this summarizes the direction we see this plan going from here, he explained, adding that the goals referenced here will be taken directly from the Biological Opinion.

Daley continued on through the Implementation Plan outline, touching on how the science presented in the Biological Opinion will be incorporated into the plan, how the survival requirements for each ESU stock will be identified, how management and research actions will be prioritized, how performance measures and standards will be identified, how research and monitoring of performance measures and critical uncertainties will be conducted, and how the annual plans and check-in

evaluations will be completed. Please refer to Enclosure G for details of Daley's presentation.

Daley touched on Section 5 of the draft outline, focusing on general strategies by "H." He also drew the group's attention to Section 5.5, which lays out a strategy for the integration of strategies and actions across all of the H's:

"Because of the multiple forums through which actions could surface, be modified or be prioritized, in addition to measures included in the RPA, the action agencies will need to integrate the priorities and strategies developed for the hydrosystem, habitat, harvest and hatcheries. The intent is to ensure that all actions are targeted at providing biological benefits for the listed ESUs and that all actions are complimentary, and consistent with achieving the survival and recovery goals of the BO. This integration will necessarily occur through many of the same regional forums and processes used to develop the actions."

In response to a question from Chris Toole, Daley said the Five-Year Implementation plan will include references to any Council Fish and Wildlife Program actions that will, in the action agencies' view, help achieve the performance measures identified in the Biological Opinion. In response to another question, Daley said the whole purpose of this Implementation Plan is to lay out a strategy for implementing the BiOp RPAs – Bonneville has no intention of using this process to renegotiate the BiOp, he said.

The only other thing I wanted to point out is that the annual implementation plans will be a list of the actions we're going to implement, how they true up with the RPA and how they'll be prioritized, said Daley. The proposed format for the one-year plans is summarized on the first page of Enclosure G. He asked the other IT participants to look this information over and provide any comments or suggestions they may have to him or to the website for this effort.

What is the best way for IT members to provide input on this plan? Ruff asked. Through the website – www.salmonrecovery.gov, Daley replied. You can also contact the leads for each section directly, he added (a list of the section leaders can be found on Page 2 of Enclosure G). The group also briefly discussed the scientific review of the draft Five-Year Implementation Plan, with Daley observing that the timing and scope of the scientific review is unknown at this time.

With respect to schedule, Daley said the action agencies are planning to release the draft One-Year and Five-Year Implementation Plan in early April, so that it can be used to inform the appropriations process. The draft plans will be posted to the salmonrecovery.gov website, he added. Do you want involvement from NMFS, the Fish and Wildlife Service and others? Palensky asked. We're going to keep talking to you and sharing information, Daley replied; you will see everything we develop as soon as it is available. It was agreed that Daley will provide an update on the Implementation Plan's development at the March IT meeting.

Once the initial plan is developed and released, what then? Dennis Rohr asked. It will be our preliminary estimate of what we can accomplish in FY'02, Daley replied; our anticipation is that it will feed into the regional prioritization processes, such as the Council/CBFWA and SCT/CRFM processes. Once that occurs, Daley said, the five-year plan will become final.

The group also discussed the desire, on the part of the states, to have more input into the development of the One-Year and Five-Year Implementation Plans. Daley observed that the states have an opportunity to influence the projects implemented in a given year through the Council/CBFWA and SCT prioritization processes. It is the action agencies who will be held accountable for implementing the measures called for in the BiOp, Daley said; while we are aware of and sensitive to the states' concerns, we have the responsibility to develop these implementation plans. I just wanted to let you know that Idaho will be seeking a modification of the process as it's currently laid out, to ensure that we have adequate input into the implementation plans and the prioritization of the activities that will be conducted through those plans, said Jim Yost.

5. Implementation Guidelines and Representation on IT.

You will recall that, at our last meeting, we asked all of the IT members to go back to their respective agencies and check about their suitability to represent them, said Ruff; now is the time to report back. Litchfield said his ability to represent Montana has been confirmed; he said a letter to this effect is available upon request. Christine Mallette said she, too, had checked on her ability to represent the State of Oregon; I have no reason to believe that the state has changed its perspective on providing the authority for representation at IT to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, she said. And you have the ability to coordinate with Oregon DEQ, Water Resources, and whoever else may have an interest in our activities? Ruff asked. Yes, Mallette replied.

Nielsen said Washington has also agreed that WDFW can represent the state in the IT's deliberations, and that he will be WDFW's representative to IT. Nielsen added that he will coordinate with WDOE through the Governor's Salmon Recovery Working Group if, for example, a water quality issue is to be discussed at IT. The Governor's office made it clear, however, that WDOE could send its own representative to the IT if they wanted to present their perspective on a given issue, said Nielsen.

Yost said the Governor has directed all of the Idaho state agencies to submit applications for all positions representing the State of Idaho outside of the State of Idaho. The final deadline is approaching; after that, the Governor will send a list of all of his appointees to the appropriate federal agencies.

Fodrea said he will be the new IT representative for the Bureau of Reclamation; he added that Pat McGrane will likely be the new TMT representative. Jim Athearn said he will be the Corps' representative to IT; Daley said he will be BPA's IT representative.

On the subject of the IT Guidelines, Palensky said he had gone through this document to make any changes necessary to reflect the changes in the new BiOp; he distributed Enclosure H, a legislative draft, dated February 1, of the “Interim Procedures – Regional Implementation Forum.” He asked that the other IT participants review this document and provide any additional comments they may have at the March It meeting.

What about tribal participation? Daley asked. We’re not there yet, but we are trying to figure out ways to involve the tribes, Palensky replied. As you’re aware, because of limited staffing, the tribes tend to participate only in those forums where they have more of a decision-making role, rather than an advisory role. We’re trying to figure out how best to coordinate the implementation of this “All-H” BiOp, said Ruff, and we’re interested in any thoughts you may have on that topic.

6. Next IT Meeting Date.

The next meeting of the Implementation Team was set for Thursday, March 1. A joint IT/TMT meeting to discuss contingency planning was set for Thursday, February 15. Meeting notes prepared by Jeff Kuechle, BPA contractor.